Australian Bureau of Statistics

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One in seven Australian workers employed on contract: ABS

Close to one in seven Australian workers said they worked on a 'contract basis' (see media note 1) in November 2006, according to figures released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

There were 1.5 million people who said they worked on a contract basis (15% of the 10.1 million employed). Almost three-quarters (73%) were employees (excluding owner managers of incorporated enterprises). The remaining 27% worked in their own business (see media note 2).

Employees on contract
Of the 1.1 million employees (see media note 3) who worked on a contract basis, 16% worked in the health care and social assistance industry and a further 16% worked in education and training, followed by retail trade (10%). Almost one-third (32%) were professionals and 14% were clerical and administrative workers. Women accounted for just over half (52%) of the employees on contract.

Business owners on contract
There were 409,800 business owners employed on contract, and of these, 36% worked in the construction industry and 15% in professional, scientific and technical services. Just over one-third (34%) were technicians and trade workers and 20% were professionals. The majority (80%) of business owners employed on a contract basis were men.

Hours worked and duration with current employer
Just over a quarter (26%) of all the people employed on a contract basis worked 45 hours or more in their main job in November 2006 compared with 24% of those not employed on a contract basis. Three out of ten (29%) people who worked on a contract basis had been with their current employer or business for less than twelve months compared with 21% of those who did not work on a contract basis.

Media note:
1. People who ‘worked on a contract basis’ are employed by an organisation to provide a particular service or task at an agreed price or rate, and generally for a specified period of time.
2. Business owners comprise owner managers of incorporated enterprises and owner managers of unincorporated enterprises.
3. Employees excluding owner managers of incorporated enterprises.

Further information is available in *Forms of Employment, Australia, November 2006*(cat. no. 6359.0).

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